# GRAND LODGES CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE

As the war progressed and its fourth year opened and the evils of military Masonry began to appear, those Grand Lodges which had held aloof from the soldier Mason saw their course justified. Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota and other Grand Bodies, which had not been swayed by the importunities of the army applicants, pursued the even tenor of their way, unruffled as yet by the complications which were shortly to follow. On the other hand, however, among those Grand Bodies which had conferred favors upon the military Mason, that element of doubt concerning the wisdom of their course, which, in 1863, had crept into their deliberations, now assumed, in 1864, large proportions and influenced many of them to take steps to curtail the flow of favors.

Masonry in New York completely abandoned its place in the ranks of the "liberals," so to speak, and took its place in the column of the "conservatives." At its Annual Communication, in 1864, Grand Master Clinton F. Paige announced that he did not regard army lodges with favor, and, considering the manner in which those already authorized had functioned, he had decided that the objections far exceeded the advantages; as a result of which he had refused authority for any more such lodges, and had also declined to grant any dispensations for conferring degrees out of time. He believed, with regard to army lodges, that

> Aside from the question of expediency, there is an unsurmountable objection in my mind, in the fact, that when the military organization to which such lodge is attached removes beyond the limits of our own State, an infringement of the jurisdictional rights of other Grand Lodges is inevitable and unavoidable (13).

Grand Master Alvin P. Hyde, of Connecticut, refused to grant any dispensations unless the act received the unanimous consent of the local lodge requesting the dispensation, and even then he thought it bad practice. The Grand Lodge of Maine sought to curtail the flow of privileges by setting a price of three dollars for each dispensation to hurry candidates through the degrees. Even in Kansas, where the privilege of the dispensation had never been abused, Grand Master Saqui thought a fee of twenty-five dollars ought to be charged for such authority; the Grand Lodge, however, feeling that the privilege had never been overworked, tabled the suggestion.

Grand Master Alvin B. Alden, attributing the rapid increase of the Order in Wisconsin to carelessness upon the part of the subordinate lodges, suggested, as a remedy for the "rushing through act," an increase in fees, and an edict prohibiting the conferring of degrees in less than the statutory time. He was opposed to army lodges, and still further opposed to their making Masons of men from jurisdictions other than the one granting them authority. He called attention to complaints of subordinate lodges regarding citizens of Wisconsin who had returned from the army claiming to have received the degrees in military lodges, some of these complaints referring to persons who had previously petitioned and been rejected before leaving home, and others to those whose moral and social standing were such that it would have been useless to have applied at home. His Grand Lodge ruled that a candidate could not be advanced within twenty days after receiving a preceding degree, and

then only upon passing a creditable examination. It also demanded that Grand Lodges authorizing military lodges should limit the authority of the latter to persons outside the jurisdiction of Wisconsin.

Grand Master Parkman, of Massachusetts, still viewing with alarm the continued influx of new material, made an effort to slow up the flow of candidates by insisting that each petition be received at a stated communication of a lodge; but even with this restriction, he had granted one hundred and fifty-six dispensations during the year. He did not think the material thus gathered into the fold was of any considerable value, as few such persons became contributing members, while most of them took what little Masonry they had thus acquired into the army, where it was quickly forgotten.

Grand Master Leverett B. Englesby, of Vermont, thought that the practice of subordinate lodges in encouraging the speedy advancement of candidates ought to be stopped.

Grand Master Thomas Sparrow, of Ohio, now rose to inquire:

> Has this rapid increase of members strengthened the tie of brotherhood, which is the foundation and cap stone, cement and glory of this ancient fraternity? Has it made us more industrious in furnishing the corn of nourishment to the hungry, the wine of refreshment to the sick, or the oil of joy to the afflicted? Has it sharpened the glorious strife of excelling each other in all the qualifications which should characterize our profession as Masons? Has this vast enlargement of the edifice added to its strength or symmetry? Has its interior been made to correspond in harmony and beauty with the magnitude and splendor of its external appearance? It has been well said: "They mistake the nature of the Masonic Institution, who estimate its strength by its numbers, or measure its prosperity by the length of the roll of its initiates. These are not the standards by which either the one or the other is to be determined. Its strength is in its principle, and its prosperity in the character of its members (14).

He also went on to say:

> It should be understood by the officers and members of subordinate lodges - once and for all - that lodges are created for the benefit of Masons, and not for the accommodation of candidates; that there are no eases of emergency in this jurisdiction, and that no lodge has the power to make them, that every petition must take its regular course (15).

He was strenuously opposed to military lodges because of their total disregard for the regulations prescribed for their government. His Grand Lodge supported him to the extent of repealing the regulations, adopted in 1861, authorizing military lodges among Ohio troops, and instructing subordinate lodges to repeal any sections of their by-laws authorizing eases of emergency.

Michigan continued to shower its favors upon army candidates, Grand Master J. Eastman Johnson having granted authority to waive the time limit in one hundred and thirty-three cases. At the Annual Communication, January 13, 1864, his Grand Lodge, however, was considerably wrought up by the action of Grand Master Thomas Saddler, of Kentucky, who had authorized the conferring of degrees out of time upon a number of soldiers of the Eleventh Michigan Regiment - properly the material of the Grand Lodge of Michigan. Brother Saddler, it appeared, had granted this authority upon the recommendation of Colonel S. B. Brown, regimental commander, who was also Deputy Grand Master

of Michigan; in addition, the Master, both Wardens and eleven members of Evergreen Lodge, No. 9, of St. Clair, Michigan, had recommended the petition.

And so, as the evils of military Masonry became plainly manifest and evident, Grand Bodies began to look with dismay and chagrin upon the havoc that had been, and was being wrought, and to cast about for means of checking it and of repairing the damage that was resulting. The future looked black and foreboding. In the words of Grand Master Thomas Hayward, of Florida, to his subordinates:

> When this war is ended, and the blessings of peace are again our happy lot, you will have much to do in your different lodges to correct the vices and improprieties which generally follow a year or more in camp (16).

# THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

As the fires of the great Civil War burned out, the confusion of Masonry continued, but sentiment among Grand Bodies definitely turned against the army Mason. Instead of the warm brotherly greeting formerly extended him in many Grand Lodges he now met coldness, mistrust and suspicion. In Michigan, stronghold of army Masonry since 1862, there now developed outspoken opposition to the institution, and Grand Master Lovell Moore refused a large number of dispensations requested for soldiers. He even went so far as to regard as clandestine Masons a number of Michigan soldiers, home on furlough, who claimed to have been made in an army lodge in Mississippi working under the jurisdiction of Indiana, for the reason that Indiana could not authorize a lodge to work in the jurisdiction of another Grand Lodge, nor to make Masons of persons belonging to the jurisdiction of Michigan.

Even Indiana, a strong supporter of military Masonry from the beginning of the war, now began to doubt the expediency of the army lodge, especially as other Grand Bodies were making complaints similar to that of Michigan in regard to the activities of Indiana's military offspring; while in Maine, requests for dispensations favoring the soldier ceased, the subordinate lodges having no desire to pay the fee of three dollars, fixed the previous year, for such favors. Grand Master William S. Whitehead, of New Jersey, insisted that all petitions take their regular course, without favors to anyone. But although the pendulum was now swinging away from the army-made Masons, yet that fact did not dispose of them. They existed, and in large numbers. Something, apparently, had to be done with them. But what? Were they to be recognized as regular Masons and taken into the fold ? Or were they to be permanently classed as clandestines ?

# NOTES

1. Review, Proc. Mich., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1862, p. 319.
2. Review, Proc. Wis., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1863, p. 406.
3. Review, Proc. La., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1862, p. 317.
4. Review, Proc. D. of C., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1863, p. 388.
5. Review, Proc. N. Y., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1862, pp. 322-3.

6. Review, Proc. Mass., 1862, in Proc Kans., 1863, p. 398.

7. Review, Proc. Mass., 1862, in Proc. Kans., 1863, p. 399.

8. Review, Proc. D. of C., 1862, in Proc. Kans, 1863, p. 388.

9. Review, Proc. Mich., 1865, in Proc. Kans., 1865, p. 549.

10.Review, Proc. Ohio, 1863, in Proc. Kans., 1864, p. 477.

11.Address, G. M. Jacob Saqui, in Proc. Kans., 1863, p. 333.

12.Review, Proc. Mich., 1863, in Proc. Kans., 1863, p. 400.

13.Review, Proc. N. Y., 1864, in Proc. Kans., 1864, p. 475.

14.Review, Proc. Ohio, 1864, in Proc. Kans., 1865, p. 555.

15.Ibid .

16.Review, Proc. Fla., 1864, in Proc. Kans., 1866, p. 87.

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